

APPLICANT: Horan, et al. : BEFORE THE PRIMARY
U.S. Serial No. 09/470,360 : EXAMINER: T. Victor OH
FILING DATE: December 22, 1999 :
RE: PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FOR : GROUP ART UNIT: 1621
CONTINUOUS ETHYL ACETATE :
PRODUCTION :

Per Fax Transmission to no. 703-308-4556
Hon. Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Applicant's Docket No. C-7197

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT AND REMARKS

Dear Sir:

This is a preliminary amendment, filed together with a continued prosecution application (CPA) for continuation application under 1.53(d) of priority case USSN 09/470,360. Please amend the present continuation application as noted.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-5 and insert the following new claims 6-11. A marked-up version of the claims is attached in APPENDIX A entitled: "MARKED-UP VERSION OF CLAIMS."

6. A process for producing ethyl acetate comprising:
- (a) contacting acetic acid and ethanol in a reaction zone in the presence of a catalyst;
 - (b) directing vapors formed in the reaction zone to a distillation means to form an azeotrope containing 10 wt. % or less of water;
 - (c) condensing the azeotrope to form a condensate;
 - (d) separating the condensate into an organic phase rich in ethyl acetate and an aqueous phase rich in water; and
 - (e) directing at least a portion of the organic phase to the reaction zone.
7. The process of claim 6 wherein at least a portion of the organic phase is directed to a membrane separation unit to form a dried organic stream.
8. The process of claim 7 wherein at least a portion of the dried organic stream is directed to the distillation means.
9. The process of claim 8 wherein at least a portion of the dried organic stream is directed to the reaction zone.

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CONTINUOUS ETHYL :
ACETATE PRODUCTION :
:

Per Facsimile to No. 703-305-7401
Washington, D.C. 20231

Applicant's Docket No. C-7197C2

COMMUNICATION

Dear Sirs:

Applicants thank Examiner Oh for the teleconference of today and notice that a response is outstanding for the application filed 2/19/02. I was unaware of the Office Action of 3/22/02 until today.

This CPA is filed in response to the Office Action of 03/22/02. Also enclosed is a 3-month Extension of Time to respond thereto.

Respectfully Submitted,



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